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NSC BRIEFING

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14 July 1960

I. A "tense calm" prevails following widespread anti-fascist rioting of 28 June - 10 July.

A. Tambroni's Christian Democratic government, dependent on neo-fascists for parliamentary majority, occasioned disturbances by inept handling of neo-fascist party congress originally scheduled for 2-4 July.

1. Government first acquiesced in holding of congress at Genoa, famous for wartime resistance, then failed to guarantee protection from hostile demonstrations.

B. Communists, exploiting public apprehension over resurgence of fascism, thrust selves into leadership of protest movement and went on to whip up anti-government demonstrations throughout country.

1. Communists want to emerge from isolation and regain support of Nenni Socialists.

II. Christian Democrats face choice between continuing Tambroni government--with risk of polarizing Italian politics--and new cabinet crisis which would imply Communist success in exploiting anti-fascist issue.

A. Party left wing, plus three small center parties, wants new government formula without neo-fascists.

1. Small center parties (Democratic Socialists and Republicans to left; Liberals to right) now seem disposed to support all-Christian Democrat cabinet, possibly headed by Fanfani.

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B. But on 14 July Tambroni indicated to parliament he was not yet ready to resign.

III. Both Communists and neo-fascists stand to gain from continuance of Tambroni government. They are likely to promote further disorders which would tend to keep Tambroni in office on the ground that he could not quit under fire.